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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional) Background for Meeting [redacted] on 21 July 1980, 1600 hours, re A Better System for Tracking of Released Information

FROM: [redacted]
Executive Officer, ISS
5B-2830, Hqs.

NO. 80-512

DATE 18 July 1980

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED	DATE FORWARDED	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
1. [redacted] C/MS/DDA 7C-18, Hqs.	STATINTL	STATINTL	
2.			Terry:
3.			Would you see that Don gets a chance to read this prior to our meeting on the subject of declassified and released documents? If you have any questions please call me.
4.			
5.			[redacted]
6.			w/att, descriptions
7.			STATINTL
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FORM 3-62 610 USE PREVIOUS EDITIONS | SECRET | CONFIDENTIAL | INTERNAL USE ONLY | UNCLASSIFIED

DRAFT

PROBLEM:

This paper addresses the problem of identification, location, and retrieval of all previously classified information released to the public either in full, after declassification, or in part, after sanitization. The types of information releases we are addressing are:

(1) Papers, statements, and speeches prepared and presented by official Agency representatives for release to the public,

(2) Information officially released to the public through FOIA and PA requests; and

(3) Information released because of legal or official requirements, i.e.:

- Litigation
- Congressional inquiry
- Manuscript review
- Etc.

The purpose of a centralized system of recording such releases would be to ensure that the Agency is consistent, fair, and equal to the various requests for information from individuals and organizations.

BACKGROUND:

This problem is not new to Agency management and there has been considerable effort devoted to finding a solution in the past.

In July 1976, the Assistant for Information, DDA (AI/DDA) addressed the problem. Responding to E.O. 11652 (subplanted by E.O. 12065), AI/DDA recognized the urgent need for the establishment of an index system to record and have readily available declassified information officially released or releasable through action stemming from requests based upon FOI, PA or the Executive Order and not excluding volumes of documents released to Congressional committees in connection with certain investigations. At that time, it was believed that the establishment of just such a central index was not a complex, technical or programming problem. A working group was established with representatives from the major components of the Agency to study exactly how to go about establishing the system.

The first meeting of the group generated significant interest about the scope of the centralized index system. Based upon ideas and comments of the representatives, it was concluded that any single index responsive to all requirements that might evolve would be a massive undertaking. The priority nature of the subject, however, dictated the need for some type of feasibility study.

In late 1976, a feasibility study was conducted by the Office of Data Processing. The study was limited to the Information and Privacy Staff (now the Information and Privacy Division of ISS). Consequently, the study lost its significance because of the limiting parameters.

The problem reasserted itself in the spring of 1977 because of the increasing interest in the Agency's activities based upon disclosures by the news media. In April, the AI/DDA and the DDO Information Review Officer (DDO/IRO) recommended that the ODP supported DDO index (PICDOC) be considered a model for an eventual single Agency system, to the degree feasible. From the foregoing recommendation developed a new working group of senior Agency officials to try to come to grips with this problem that continued to plague the Agency.

As a result, in November 1977, the Acting DDA chartered an Agency Working Group to Study Release of CIA Information to the Public and charged the group to study, among other things, the feasibility of developing and implementing a centralized index of all material released to the public. Thus was launched a second effort to come to grips with this pressing issue.

The Working Group rendered its report on 23 February 1978. Its findings and recommendations were not encouraging; they recommended against the establishment of a centralized index at that time. While the Working Group supported the concept as a desirable tool, it said that the index was very probably unobtainable given the nature of the Agency's information release activities. The supporting documentation said, in effect, there existed a rather large, nebulous body of information placed in the public domain by means other than documents that made the concept impractical. The report went on to comment that even if the index were limited to documentary releases it would provide only partial coverage. (There was no supportive information to this conclusion.)

The results of these studies have not been encouraging due to several seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

OBSTACLES:

This section attempts to identify some, but by no means all, of the problems which must be addressed in order to obtain a reasonable solution.

(1) Classification:

The authority and need to classify material is unmanageable from a centralized recording system standpoint. The concept of tracking every classified document is impractical.

(2) Declassification:

The people with the authority to declassify documents not under their direct control is a limited number and well defined.

But anyone who classifies a document may also declassify that document. This makes the concept of a centralized system of recording and tracking every declassified document impractical.

(3) Current Systems for recording declassified or released documents:

There are several systems in the Agency used to record data about declassified and/or released information.

All of these current systems were designed and built to fit a specific purpose and will not independently support an Agency-wide requirement without a major redesign and development effort.

See (attachment)

(4) Official release of information:

There are many (approximately 15) offices or individuals in the Agency who officially have authority to release information to the public. This adds complexity to the problem of identifying and recording the releases.

(5) Destruction of sanitized documents:

Documents which are sanitized and released to the public are considered temporary records and are destroyed at the end of five years.

Recommendation:

The sanitized version should be stored with and treated as an extension of the original document and subjected to the records schedule of that document. This would greatly reduce the possibility of different sanitized versions of the same document being released to the public.

Previous attempts to identify the type of automated system needed to accomplish this objective have failed and with good reason. Before you can make these types of determinations you must first understand the game, identify the players and establish clear and precise rules. This has never been done.

OPTIONS:

In considering an automated system to help solve this problem there appears to be only four logical options.

(OPTION 1):

Continuation of the current efforts. We rely very heavily on experience, human memory, manual searches of files and the present automated systems (see attachment). This option is obviously not fulfilling our needs to the extent we desire. It is expensive in terms of manpower and inadequate for tracking previous releases of declassified material.

There is no Agency standard for manual or automated systems of recording and retrieving information on this subject. The components who have developed systems, both manual and automated, have tailored them for their own use. The systems are incompatible in both the information collected and the form in which it is stored.

(OPTION 2):

Modify one of the existing automated systems to accept the type and volume of information required to meet the Agency's needs for recording and retrieving this data. This option is addressing the automated systems which are being used currently (see attachment).

The concept is possible, but the desirability of doing this is very questionable and raises many difficult issues.

(1) Which system? The current systems were not intended to collect the type or volume of data which is needed when addressing the problem of Agency-wide release of declassified information. The software and possibly hardware modifications needed to accommodate this new requirement would be more costly than the original system design and development charges. The original purpose of this system must also be preserved to insure that it can be used to service the original requirement.

(2) Staffing and Budget. The new requirement, on one of the existing systems, if maintained and operated in its current component, would require increasing their staffing level. The responsibility of an Agency-wide system would mean developing procedures for users both for entering data and retrieving information from the system.

(3) Agency-wide focus. The component and system chosen would need to function in an environment free of component-oriented ideas and influences. This could cause friction and waste.

(4) Cost. The cost of a systems study and modifications which would be necessary would probably be as costly as developing a new system (see OPTION (4) COST).

(OPTION 3):

Build a software link or interface to join the existing automated systems and allow a single request for information on any one system to automatically query all of the systems. This is the impossible dream. One reason for such a link never becoming a reality is first and foremost the cost. Building and maintaining the interface would be costly in terms of software and hardware. A second reason is the understandable desirability on the part of the DDO to restrict access to their automated systems. Athird is that all of the existing systems are not on-line which means an automatic access would be currently impossible.

(OPTION 4):

Develop a new system specifically designed to capture, store, and retrieve this information. Centralize the control and management of this system in one component. Establish a clear definition of the types of data to be collected and the methods to be used for storing and retrieving information.

This option will also require the support of upper-level Agency management for a commitment of money and people, as well as Agency-wide guidance requiring all components to provide information to be stored in the system.

The cost of developing such a system would depend very much on the types of information required to effectively accomplish the task of tracking declassified and released documents. Experience tells us that even the simplest index system will be expensive to develop and maintain.

If you make the assumption that this option will be built using ODP analysts and existing facilities such as the ODP Standard Data Base Management Systems and terminals you can get some idea of what the planning and development might cost. The study would probably take one manyear and the development from six months to one year which could cost from 100,000 to 150,000 dollars. The yearly maintenance costs would depend on the type of system, number of requests, and volume of data involved. The greatest initial expense would be in going back and capturing all of the previously released information and again the cost is very difficult to estimate without some idea of the volume of data involved or the method which would be used to accomplish the task.

RECOMMENDATION:

In order to be able to recommend one of the options, management must answer the following questions:

(1) What is the ultimate goal?

(2) Is it worth doing?

(3) How much money, manpower, and time is it worth?

After these questions have been answered, if we are still interested in pursuing one of the options, then I would recommend that you build a new system, (OPTION 4).

Recap:

OPTION (1) -
Continuation of current efforts:

Inadequate and not meeting our current needs.

OPTION (2) -
Modification of an existing automated system:

Experience tells us that this approach is neither economical nor successful.

OPTION (3) -
Software link:

Not technically feasible at this time and if it were it would meet the most resistance.

OPTION (4) -
Development of a new automated system:

Allow a fresh unbiased look at an old problem.

The building of a new system is more than just developing hardware and software to handle data. The most critical decisions, especially in a system such as this one, will be:

(1) Do we have the complete understanding and concurrence of top Agency management and of those components which will be affected by the new system?

(2) Who will be responsible for the development, maintenance, and daily operation of the new system?

(3) Establish a clearly defined objective and determine what information must be collected to accomplish that goal.

(4) Choose the most economical system available that will satisfy your objective. There are many options available and before one can be chosen with confidence, you must first have a good definition of its purpose.

The component responsible for capturing information about documents that have been declassified and released must be more than a place where others send paper because that is the rule. In order to make such a system work properly, this component should have prior knowledge of releases and the single releasing authority. The releasing authority would be no more than a signature which indicates that the information is now part of the system and not authority to evaluate the content of releases or the individual's right to release the information.

I further recommend that an analyst from the Office of Data Processing be assigned to evaluate the needs and make an informal recommendation on the type of automated system needed to store and retrieve this volume of information.

Attachment:
System Descriptions

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT

SYSTEM DESCRIPTIONS

The three automated systems described below are probably not the only automated systems or files which exist in the Agency and contain some information about declassified or released documents, but they are most certainly the major holdings.

DARE

The DARE system is used by the Classification Review Division of the Information Services Staff (CRD/ISS) to document the decisions made in the systematic review of permanent Agency records for declassification. CRD plans in the near future to store information on all declassified permanent records throughout the Agency as well as all classification extension determinations requiring DCI authorization. The future use of the DARE system as an on-line data base is also being considered.

The DARE system is a batch application written in PLI Programming Language and is processed on IBM 370's in headquarters room GC-03. The software and data are not compatible with the DECAL an PICDOC systems.

The DARE system is currently limited to data which has undergone systematic review and will soon contain all (permanent) documents reviewed to date.

The data base meets the requirements of CRD, but even with the addition of the new data will fall short of recording all declassified documents. This data base was not designed to address the problem of released documents.

DECAL

The DECAL system is used by the Information and Privacy Division of the Information Services Staff (IPD/ISS) to store a brief index of documents of general interest which have been declassified or sanitized and released to the public.

The DECAL software programs are run in the GC-03 computer center on the Interim Safe System. The software is called Aegis and is a unique software package developed and maintained by NFAC/OCR. The data is indexed to allow retrieval by several different search fields and key words.

The DECAL data is limited and does not contain all declassified or sanitized documents, only those deemed of general interest and, up until 1977, only documents which were released as a result of mandatory review were entered into DECAL. The system currently contains some 2,500 records which is an indicator of its limited scope.

The system, although not adequate to solve the problem of recording all declassified or desanitized documents released to the public, is fulfilling the current needs of IPD.

The DECAL system and the data stored in the system are not compatible with "DARE", the other ISS system which is used to store information about declassified documents or PICDOC, the DO data base used for the same purpose.

PICDOC

The PICDOC system is used by the DDO to retrieve documents that have been previously released in whole or in part under FOIA, PA, E.O. 12065, and non-disclosure litigations. The data base consists of three off-line files and is processed using the NIPS software and is run on the IBM 370 system in headquarters room GC-47. This data base currently has 50,000 records and by the end of FY 80 will contain 125,000 records.

The software system and the data are not compatible with the DARE or DECAL systems and although the PICDOC system serves the purposes of the DO, it falls far short of meeting the needs of the Agency for tracking all declassified and released documents.

DDA

ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP Date 18 JUL 1980

TO: (Name, office symbol, room number, building, Agency/Post)	Initials	Date
1. EO/DDA		7/18
2. ADDA		7-21
3. DD/A		
4.		
5. A clear carbon picture		

Action	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation
As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

REMARKS

Don -

ISS forwarded the attached background paper for your review prior to a meeting that you have scheduled on 21 July at 1600 hours to discuss:

A Better System for Keeping Track of Released Information

Not being familiar with either the subject or the requirement, I have not taken action on this paper. Please advise if you would like me to do so.

I am available to discuss this with you at your convenience. [redacted] STATINTL

DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, and similar actions

FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post)	Room No.—Bldg.
[redacted] Chief, Management Staff, DDA	7C18 Hqs
	Phone No. 5226

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STATINTL

TRANSMITTAL SLIP | DATE: 21 July 1980

TO: D/ODP

ROOM NO.	BUILDING
2D 00	Hqs

REMARKS:

Attached material for 4:00 p.m. mtg with DDA, ADDA, Messrs. [redacted]

[redacted]

DD - Ext

STATINTL

STATINTL

FROM: O/DDA

ROOM NO.	BUILDING	EXTENSION
7D 24	Hqs	5454

FORM NO 241 1 FEB 55 REPLACES FORM 36-8 WHICH MAY BE USED. (47)